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Reply to Office Action of July 21, 2005

Docket No. IK-0068

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for protecting a door gasket of a refrigerator is provided. The apparatus includes a cushioning member positioned either on a door or on a main body of the refrigerator to prevent any contact between the gasket and the main body of the refrigerator as the door tilts open to provide access to the storage space in the refrigerator. The cushioning member may include a roller, or a plurality of rollers, which form an interface between the door and the main body as the door is tilted relative to the main body, and which allow the outer periphery of the door to maintain sliding contact with the main body as the door continues to tilt. The sliding interface provided by the cushioning member precludes damage to the gasket, which would otherwise be compressed between the door and the main body as the door tilts relative to the main body, thus maintaining the integrity of the seal provided by the gasket.